

Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania. Genealogy, Family History, Biography, Containing Historical Sketches of Old Families and of Representatives and Prominent Citizens Past and Present. In Two Volumes – Illustrated, Volume II, Chicago, J. H. Beers and Company, 1916

Alvin Kistler, owner of a large tract of land in West Penn Township, and one of the progressive young farmers of that section, has many of the characteristics which have come to be associated with the name he bears. The **Kistlers** in this part of Schuylkill County are a branch of an old Berks County family founded in this country by **Johannes** or **John George Kistler**, and are people of high character and the sterling qualities pertaining to good citizenship and helpful lives.

On the records of the Jerusalem Church in Albany Township, Berks County, known in the eighteenth century as the Allemangel Church, there are recorded the baptisms of hundreds of the **Kistler** children, while in the cemetery under the shadow of the church are many graves marked with the same name. Near the center of the oldest part of the cemetery lies a slate stone (which is now being replaced by the descendants with a marble slab) bearing the inscription "**I. G. K. 1767.**" This is supposed to be the stone that marked the burial place of the progenitor of the American **Kistlers**, who was legally known as **Johannes**, but was called **Joerg** or **George** by Pastor Schumacher in his record and **Hanjoerg** or **John George** by his neighbors.

Johannes Kistler was a native of the Palatinate, in Germany. On Oct. 5, 1737, he came in the ship "Townshend" from Amsterdam to Philadelphia, and soon after to Falkner Swamp, or Goshenhoppen, in what is now Montgomery County, Pa. It is supposed he was accompanied by his wife, **Anna Dorothea**, and his oldest children. In 1747 he took out a warrant for land and moved to Albany Township, Berks County, then wild and barren, where he made his permanent home. The vicinity was named "Allemangel" or "All Wants." **Johannes Kistler** was taxed in 1756 in Albany Township, and was naturalized in 1761, on Sept. both of which year he and his neighbor, **Michael Brobst**, appeared before the Supreme court at Philadelphia, and there received the papers which made them citizens of Pennsylvania. He was a Lutheran, and served for a number of years as elder of the Allemangel Church, where his children were baptized and confirmed. His children were: (1) **Jacob** left seven children, **Philip, Jacob, Michael, Solomon, Daniel, Catharine** and **Magdalene**. **Samuel Kistler Brobst**, a teacher of James A. Garfield, was a grandson of **Philip**; and so was **Michael Kistler**, the tanner, whose son **Stephen** was at one time the most extensive tanner in eastern Pennsylvania. (2) **John** remained on the homestead after his father's death. The name **John** runs through at least five generations and the trade of blacksmith follows it. **John's** children were: **John William**, born May 29, 1757; and **Abraham**, born Dec. 20, 1761, who is the ancestor of the Perry County **Kistlers**, for whom **Kistler** post office was named. A descendant, **Rev. Dr. John Kistler**, has for many years been professor at the oldest Lutheran Theological Seminary in America, located at Hartwick, N. J. (3) **George** remained in Berks County. In 1779 he was the owner of 248 acres of land and a gristmill. In 1778 he was elected elder of the Allemangel Church, and as he was referred to as **George Kistler, Sr.**, he doubtless had a son **George**. The archives of Pennsylvania show that a **George Kistler** served in the Continental army during the war of the Revolution. (4) **Philip**, born Oct. 19, 1745, is next in the line we are tracing. (5) **Michael** moved to Ohio, and is the ancestor of the large **Kistler** settlements in Indiana. His family consisted of **John, Michael, Joseph, Nathan, Monroe, Salome** and **Judith**. (6) **Samuel**, the youngest son of his father,

married **Elizabeth Ladich** and **Catharine Brobst**, and had three children by his first marriage and twelve by the second. (7) **Barbara** married (first) a **Brobst** and (second) **Michael Mosser**, of Lowhill. (8) **Dorothea** married **Michael Reinhart**. (9) **Elizabeth** married a **Mr. Keller**, near Hamburg, Pennsylvania. **Philip Kistler**, son of **George**, above, was born Oct. 19, 1745, and died Aug. 28, 1809. He had nine children: **Jacob, John, Ferdinand, Philip, Jonathan, Barbara, Maria, Catherine** and **Elizabeth**. Of these, **Jacob** was a lieutenant in the war of 1812.

Jonathan Kistler, son of **Philip**, was born Nov. 10, 1799, in Berks County, and was raised on the place where his grandson **Charles S. Kistler** now lives. He was reared by **Jacob Wehr**, worked among farmers while young, and after he married started out for himself. In 1829 he built the gristmill which still stands and is known as the **Kistler** mill. He also became the owner of about two hundred acres of land, a great deal of which he cleared and cultivated, following milling and farming on this place until his death, which occurred when he was about seventy-nine years of age. His wife, **Sarah (Shellhammer)**, born Aug. 4, 1800, daughter of **Simon** and **Catherine (Long) Shellhammer**, died aged eighty-one years. They were the parents of children as follows: **Polly** married **Michael Houser**; **Rebecca** married **Jacob Wertman**; **Hannah** married **Joseph Shaeffer**; **Daniel** married **Rebecca Sechler**; **David**, who resides in West Penn Township, married **Mary Hagenbuch**, now deceased; **John** is mentioned below; **William**, who was a school teacher, never married; **Nathan** never married; **Jonathan K.** married **Lydia Shellhammer**; **Elizabeth** married **Timothy Zehner**. The father retired some years before his death. He took an active part in politics as a member of the Democratic Party, and was a justice of the peace for forty-four years, and a leader in Zion's Lutheran Church, in West Penn Township, serving as elder, deacon and trustee. He and his wife are buried at that church.

John Kistler, son of **Jonathan**, was born March 24, 1832, in West Penn Township, and was educated there. He assisted with the work on his father's farm while young, and later bought the farm of about seventy-five acres where **Ambrose Lechleitner** now resides. He operated that farm for a number of years, sold it, and bought the farm of ninety acres which is now owned by his son, **Albert S.** Of this farm, about eighty acres are cleared. **Mr. Kistler** carried on general farming, and for many years also followed the stonemason's trade, which he learned when he was a young man. He attended market at Tamaqua. **Mr. Kistler** was an active man up to the time of his death, which occurred Nov. 23, 1909. He is buried in the cemetery of Zion's Lutheran Church in West Penn Township, of which church he was a devout member and faithful official, serving as elder and deacon. He held the township office of school director, and was a Democrat in politics.

Mr. Kistler's first wife, **Caroline (Hagenbuch)**, was born March 4, 1836, daughter of **Amos** and **Sarah (Bailey) Hagenbuch**, and died Jan. 19, 1856, the mother of one child, **Jonathan**, born July 6, 1855. He is married to **Alvina Mantz**, and they reside at Allentown, Pa. **Mrs. Kistler** is buried at Zion's Church in West Penn Township. For his second wife **Mr. Kistler** married **Cordelia Hagenbuch**, who was born March 10, 1839, a sister of his first wife, and a large family came to this union: **William**, born July 15, 1858, married **Ella Meyerhoff**, and their children are **Rosie, Bert** and **Raymond**; **Mary**, born Nov. 18, 1859, died Feb. 22, 1860; **Sarah**, born Dec. 27, 1860, married **Uriah Reber**, of Neffs (P. O.), Lehigh Co., Pa., and has children, **William, Charles, Ralph, Jennie, Francis** and **Harvey**; **Amanda**, born June 1, 1863, died Feb.

4, 1884, the wife of **Mahlon Lutz** and mother of one child, **Laura**, who is deceased; **Alice** was born April 28, 1865; **Ida**, born March 26, 1868, married **William Brobst**, of Owl Creek, Schuylkill Co., Pa., and has had three children, Charles, **Mabel** (deceased) and **Alice**; **Oliver** was born Jan. 4, 1870; **Franklin**, born Dec. 8, 1871, died aged forty years; **Amandus**, born Aug. 18, 1873, lives in Missouri; **Rosa**, born Jan. 9, 1876, is married to **John Nester**, of Tamaqua, and has had two children, **Mary** (deceased) and **Herbert**; one son died in infancy; **Albert S.** is a farmer in West Penn township; **Alvin** is mentioned below. The mother of this family is now living at the home of **David K. Kistler**, in West Penn Township.

Alvin Kistler was born July 11, 1881, in West Penn Township, and educated in the public schools there. Until twenty-seven years of age he worked for his father on the home farm, this being the place his brother **Albert** now owns, in West Penn Township. When he left the home farm he bought the tract where he now lives, from **Isaac Gerber**, having originally 224 acres, thirty-eight of which he sold to the Lehigh & New England Railroad Company. Of the remainder, 186 acres, there are about one hundred acres under cultivation, devoted to general farming and trucking. **Mr. Kistler** markets his produce to Tamaqua, making regular trips there, both winter and summer. His affairs have prospered under strict attention, but he also finds time for matters of general interest, takes an active part in the workings of the Democratic Party, and has served as election inspector. He is a member of Washington Camp No. 615, P. O. S. of A., at Andreas, Pa., and of Zion's Lutheran Church in West Penn Township.

Mr. Kistler is married to **Sadie Agnes Gerber**, who was born Sept. 3, 1879, in West Penn Township, a daughter of **Phaon** and **Harriet (Romig) Gerber**, and they are the parents of five children, born as follows: **Percy Albert**, Aug. 8, 1903; **Edward Leroy**, Jan. 15, 1906; **Myrtle Harriet**, July 4, 1908; **John William**, Oct. 24, 1910; **Frank Francis**, Feb. 28, 1913. The children old enough are attending school in the township. **Mrs. Kistler** was educated in West Penn Township and lived at home until her marriage. She is a member of Zion's Reformed Church, in West Penn Township, of which Rev. H. D. Houtz is pastor, and attends the Sunday school of that organization. The **Gerbers** are a very old and much respected family in West Penn Township. **Reuben Gerber**, great-grandfather of **Mrs. Kistler**, was born on a small tract which is now the property of **Alvin Kistler**, and followed farming. His wife's maiden name was **Houser**, and they had the following children: **Isaac**, **David**, **Edwin**, **John** (deceased), **Caroline (Mrs. Kistler)** and **Ellavina** (widow of **Jacob Dietrich**, living at Tamaqua). The father was a Democrat in politics. His religious connection was with Zion's Reformed Church, and both parents are buried at that church.

Edwin Gerber, the grandfather of **Mrs. Alvin Kistler**, was born in 1822, and died March 13, 1898. He was a native of West Penn Township, where he lived and died, and followed farming all his life, cultivating the place now owned by his son **Frank**. He married **Sarah Moyer**, who was born Dec. 31, 1834, a daughter of **John** and **Salome (Baer) Mover**, and survives him, living with her son **Franklin** in West Penn Township. They had three children: **Franklin** married **Angeline Eckert**; **Phaon** was the father of **Mrs. Kistler**; **Amandus** died young. **Mr. Gerber** is buried in the cemetery of Zion's Church in West Penn Township, of which he was a Reformed member. Politically he was a Democrat.

Phaon Gerber, Mrs. Kistler's father, was born in West Penn Township Aug. 2, 1855, and died Sept. 24, 1908. He was educated in his native township, and worked for his father until twenty-one years old, after which he was employed one year on a farm in Packer Township, Carbon County. He married and returned to West Penn Township, and then bought a farm of forty-eight acres from his father, remaining on it the rest of his life. Besides farming he did wood chopping, and marketed his produce to Tamaqua. On Jan. 17, 1879, he was married at Weatherly, Carbon Co., Pa., by Rev. M. H. Mishler, to **Harriet Romig**, a native of Quakake, Carbon County, daughter of **John** and **Rosanna (Faust) Romig**, and six children were born to this union: **Sadie Agnes**, wife of **Alvin Kistler**; **Eva Rosanna**, born Sept. 24, 1882, married to **Claude Steigerwalt**; **Oscar Frank**, born April 20, 1884, who married **Jennie Knapp**; **Mahlon John**, born Nov. 4, 1889, married to **Katie Clause**; **Elmer Edward**, twin of **Mahlon**, married to **Lena Behler**; and **Stella Adeline**, born July 26, 1896, living at home. The mother is still residing on the home farm. **Mr. Gerber** was a Democrat in political faith. Socially he belonged to the Order of Independent Americans, being a member of Pocahontas Council, No. 406, at Chain, Pa., and he was an active member of the Reformed congregation of Zion's Church in West Penn Township, which he served faithfully as elder. He is buried at that church.

Benjamin Romig, grandfather of **Mrs. Phaon Gerber**, was a farmer, and one of the original settlers at Weatherly, Carbon County. At one time he was the owner of every foot of land on which the borough of Weatherly now stands. His children were: **Nathan**; **John**; **Sarah**, who married **Daniel Faust** (he is deceased); **Judith**, who was the wife of the late **John Lomison**; **Susan**, who was the wife of the late **Edwin Young**; **Mary**, who died unmarried; and **Matilda, Mrs. Solomon Gerhard**. **Mrs. Gerhard** is now the only survivor of the family. **Benjamin Romig** was a Democrat and a member of the Reformed Church. He is buried at Quakake.

John Romig, son of **Benjamin**, was born in February, 1824, passed all his life in Packer Township, Carbon County, and lived retired for about thirty years before his death. He built a house on the ground now occupied by the Warner store at Weatherly and a sawmill where the borough building now stands. He was a successful farmer, a public-spirited citizen, and a staunch supporter of the common schools, a kind-hearted neighbor, a good father, and a faithful member of the Reformed Church at Quakake, in whose work he was always active. He served as elder, deacon and trustee of his church, and was a popular township official, holding all the local offices. Politically he was a Democrat. He married **Rosanna Faust**, daughter of **John Faust**, and they are buried at Quakake. They had children as follows: **Emma** married **Henry Englehart**; **Harriet** married **Phaon Gerber**; **Frank** married **Ella Flickinger** and they made their home at Williamsport, Pa.; **Alfred** married **Emma Heller**, and settled at Freeland, Pa.; **Sophia** married **J. J. Gerhard**; **Adeline** married **Lewis Bender**, of Scranton, Pa.; **Elizabeth** married **George Ulshaefer**, of Weatherly, Pa.; **Abigail** married **Edward Kester**, of Allentown, Pa.; **Matilda** married **Levi Englehart**, of Weatherly; **Rosanna** married **Charles Gray**, of Weatherly; **John** is next in the family; **Mary** married **Henry Hagenbuch**, of Nazareth, Pennsylvania.